



FISHERIES ADVISORY COUNCIL - A group of dedicated citizens from all regions of the state working together for fish and fishing in Connecticut.

March 7, 2011

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

Testimony of Dr. Vincent P. Ringrose, Chairman, FISHERIES ADVISORY COUNCIL.

Re: ***RAISED BILL 6505***

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and members of the Environmental Committee:

I wish to testify on the behalf of the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC) concerning proposed Raised Bill 6505.

The FAC is an umbrella organization representing 40 organizations and affiliates throughout the State that advises the Department of Environmental Protection on all matters pertaining to fisheries conservation and management, both in fresh and marine waters. FAC member organizations include Trout Unlimited, CT Bass Federation Nation, CT Fly Fishermen's Association, Fairfield County League of Sportsmen, and many others.

Anglers in Connecticut, particularly trout fishermen, strongly support Raised Bill 6505. It is essential that stream flow regulations include groundwater. This is necessary to meet the mandates of the statute to (1) "recognize and provide for stream and river ecology and the requirements of aquatic life," and (2) "preserve and protect the natural aquatic life, including anadromous fish, contained within such waters."

Trout have always been associated with clean, cool, clear water and are generally considered to be indicators of the quality of our environment. In many ways healthy trout populations are a measure of our success as environmental stewards. It is a well known fact that healthy trout populations require groundwater to survive and reproduce. Groundwater is necessary to maintain flow levels and moderate temperatures in the both the heat of summer and the dead of winter. Groundwater is what keeps trout eggs clean from sediment while they develop in the stream gravel. In short, groundwater is what enables trout to survive in some streams whereas absence of groundwater is why they are no longer found in other waters.

The FAC asks for your support of this bill on behalf of Connecticut's 150,000 trout fishermen who take approximately two million fishing trips per year and spend millions of dollars in pursuit of their favorite fish.

We will be happy to provide any assistance we can to further this goal in conjunction with your efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal.